SCIENCE & GOVERNMENT REPORT

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Carter Pledges Increased Aid for Science

Distress signals from the scientific community paid off November 22 when Jimmy Carter said that he and his science adviser "were impressed with some of the problems we have," and that he is moving to put more money into the research enterprise.

The announcement, made in the course of honoring 15 scientists and engineers with the National Medal of Science, is not the same as money in the bank. The President specified no sums; an official at the Office of Management and Budget told SGR that no boom is in the offing, and Congress, which will have to pass on any specific proposals, is yet to receive them.

But the presidential signal was clear: Science, which has been studying its own health and coming up with dour reports over the past few years, has persuaded Mr. Carter that it needs help.

The President's words (key excerpts from his statement are on Page 3) were in the category of extemporaneous ceremonial remarks, which means they are considerably short of holy writ. But Jimmy Carter has amply demonstrated that he speaks carefully, and therefore his Medal of Science pronouncement should be looked at carefully.

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In terms of where a fiscal shot in the arm might be applied, the only specifics to which the President referred were as follows: "The quality of scientific equipment has been falling off rapidly in recent years. The number of top-ranked research centers has been falling off in recent years. The percentage of faculty members who are scientists and who are also young has been falling off rapidly in recent years."

What does he propose to do about these problems, all of which have been documented in recent years in a series of studies conducted or commissioned by the National Science Foundation?

The answer, unfortunately, is a bit vague. NSF, of course, is the traditional agency for putting federal money into science, but the President never mentioned that agency. Instead, he noted that other federal agencies "have relegated research and development to a fairly low position of priority. But I directed the Office of Management and Budget to boost those research and development items much higher, and they will be funded accordingly."

The President also said — and this is most important to note — that "We are not trying to establish nor to maintain a college aid program," adding, in effect, that research and development merit support on a utilitarian basis, rather than as a means for propping up academic finance.

What this all adds up to, then, is that the President is sympathetic to the fiscal plight of research, he aims to squeeze some money for it from the budgets of departments that he feels should but haven't been doing their bit, and he's opposed to any kind of across-the-board boost for research spending in academe.

Inquiries at OMB turned up the fact that last August, federal agencies were directed to give a higher priority to

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In Brief

From within the Office of Management and Budget comes an influential voice which says (though privately): The National Science Foundation has grown as much as should be permitted for some time to come — it's now up to $815 million a year. Further expansion of research should be concentrated in mission-oriented agencies, and the federal government should seek ways to encourage industry to boost R&D spending — so says our source at OMB.

Meanwhile, the $4.5 million that NSF was going to put into a program known as Basic Research Stability Grants has been throttled quietly at OMB, though "deferred" is the word under the post-Nixon rules against impoundment. The grants, which were pushed through Congress by the Association of American Universities, would provide small bundles of cash to assist universities in spending bigger bundles of cash. Specifically, they would help meet costs generated by, but not covered in, federally supported research projects. OMB objected on the grounds that "entitlement" programs — defined as getting money just for being there — are poor public policy. Besides, they tend to get rooted and grow.

Academy President Philip Handler continues to heap wrath on proponents of federal regulation of recombinant DNA research. He told a Congressional committee Nov. 2 that the object of some of them is to "use the power of government for the suppression of ideas. . .That would take us back to an era of dogmatism from which mankind only recently escaped." That's what he said.

. . . Budget Boost Continues Ford Policy

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research activities in the budgets that they are preparing for the coming fiscal year. But apart from that, according to one OMB source, there has been no high-level decision for anything resembling a concentrated aid program for science.

In fact, the view at OMB is that Mr. Carter's statement should be regarded primarily as a ratification of President Ford's decision to maintain research budgets at a level slightly ahead of inflation. Mr. Ford, who was friendlier to science than is generally recognized, produced two successive budgets that were deliberately fashioned to make up for some of the inflationary erosion that began to bite into science spending around the turn of the decade.

According to our OMB source, the significance of Mr. Carter's kind words for science is that the Ford policy is to be continued. As for numbers, they're not settled, but as preparations come down to the wire for the budget that the Carter Administration will submit to Congress early next year, the indications are that spending on research will be scheduled at a level of three to five per cent above an anticipated inflation rate of five to six per cent.

Mr. Carter's genial nod to science suggests that he has been listening with some care to his science adviser, Frank Press, and that, Press, in turn, has accepted a body of literature on the fiscal woes of the scientific community. Starting in 1973 with *Science Indicators,* a study commissioned by the National Science Board, NSF's topmost policy body, the science establishment has been painstakingly collecting and publishing data on the fiscal infirmities of research. Further documentation — which turns out to have been particularly influential — came last spring with the publication of *The State of Academic Science* (SGR Vol. VII, No. 10), a book-length inquiry that embodied data drawn from 760 administrators, researchers, and graduate students at 36 universities.

The core message of that work, written by two political scientists, Bruce L. R. Smith and Joseph J. Karlesky, was that elite institutions remain strong in science, but are getting frayed at the edges, while lesser-ranked places are either in serious trouble or soon will be.

The study was financed by the Sloan Foundation and NSF, which now must be ranked as one of Washington's most sophisticated special pleaders. NSF never beats the drums loudly, but it tends to dominate the science of science field of study, and anyone looking for data on the health of the research enterprise must make do with NSF's productions. This is not to say that they are flawed or suspect; rather, it is to note that just about everything we know on the subject traces back in one way or another to the federal agency that holds central responsibility for financing science.

In any case, the *State of Academic Science* is a much-referred to work in Washington science-policy circles. Even at OMB, which is acutely insensitive to special pleading, grudging admiration is expressed for the book. "It didn't tell us anything we didn't know," said one OMB man, "but it pulled it all together."

And, it should be recorded, the three points on which Mr. Carter was most specific — scientific equipment, the "falling off" of top-ranked research centers, and jobs for young researchers, well, these are three points heavily stressed by authors Smith and Karlesky.

The National Medal of Science awards ceremony was a well-staged and congenial event that attracted a major portion of Washington's science-policy community. Nearly a year in office, Mr. Carter used the occasion to make his first presidential salute to science, which came at the beginning of a 15-minute ceremony in the Old Executive Office Building. Frank Press, who, like all past presidential science advisers, is the object of endless speculation as to whether or not he's influential with the boss, looked highly pleased as Mr. Carter spoke kindly of science. Following the ceremony, though with the President gone off to other matters, Press presided at a reception and lunch for the medal recipients and some 150 guests in the elegant eighth-floor dining room of the State Department. —DSG

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Excerpts from Carter's Science Statement

I am particularly grateful, having had some engineering background, some scientific background, in business, agriculture, politics, to come here as President this morning to express the appreciation of our Nation for the tremendous present, past and future contribution that you distinguished Americans have earned.

Most of you have performed so superbly because of a dedication to your own profession; probably most without any thought that you might ultimately be honored for it, except in a contribution to a better life for the people of this country and for those around the world.

As I have looked down the list of those who are being honored today, the breadth of the interest that you have shown and the broad scope of the contributions that you have made is quite remarkable.

As President, I now have the responsibility to prepare the national budget presentation to Congress, after consultation with Frank Press. He is my Science and Technology Adviser. We were impressed with some of the problems that we have.

The quality of scientific equipment has been falling off rapidly in recent years. The number of top-ranked research centers has been falling off in recent years. The percentage of faculty members who are scientists and who are also young has been falling off rapidly in recent years.

In 1968, about 45 percent of the faculty members were young men and women. Now that has dropped off to about only 25 percent ; which shows that in the future we have a problem on our hands, unless we take strong action to correct these trends.

I am assessing each individual agency's budget these days. This afternoon I will have three major agencies to assess. In many instances the heads of those agencies, the Cabinet members and others, have relegated research and development to a fairly low position of priority. But I directed the Office of Management and Budget to boost those research and development items much higher, and they will be funded accordingly.

Finally, I would like to say that we want to make sure that the climate for research and development in our country is enhanced, with my own imprimatur of approval and interest, with a broad-scale exhibition of interest on numerous occasions by the Members of Congress and my own Administration, with publicity accruing to those who have achieved notably in the scientific and engineering field, and also in direct budget allocations.

We are not trying to establish nor to maintain a college aid program. I think to the extent that basic research and development commitments can be oriented towards things that improve the quality of our people's lives and enhance the security of our Nation, contribute to our position in world leadership, to that extent these allocations of funds and interests will be more readily acceptable and supported by the American people.

What we do in science in this country has a tremendous impact on the decisions made in other nations, strong and independent nations, because there is, as you know, a scientific community that is drawn together by mutuality of interest, and that is able to transcend obstacles that are raised by national boundaries. And the exchange of information, the consultation, mutual progress, the sharing of responsibility, even between nations like ourselves and the Soviet Union, is one that lays a basis for future peace and understanding and a sharing of a common purpose for humankind.

Medal of Science Tells Lot About Science in the US

The Medal of Science, established by Congress in 1959, nicely illustrates some of the realities of science in the United States. The US government's highest award for science and engineering, it is, nonetheless, a medal of *Science,* which many engineers feel is a needless slight to their profession.

Since the first award was made, in 1962, the medal has been bestowed on 132 persons. Of these, only one is a women — Barbara McClintock, who received the award in 1970.

The award is made by the President, upon the recommendation of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science, a blue-ribbon group on which the director of the National Science Foundation and the president of the National Academy of Sciences are ex-officio members.

From 1962 to 1970, the awards were made annually, but Richard Nixon, annoyed at the scientific community for one thing or another, let the award lapse for three years, and didn't even fill expired memberships on the awards committee. In 1974, with the Watergate disaster in full progress, Nixon was looking for opportunities to appear presidential and dignified. One minor straw that

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Survey Research Practices Faulted in New Report

Surveys — door-to-door, by mail or telephone — are the reconnaissance patrols of modernday big organizations. They are also a major research tool for the social sciences, as well as a highly saleable product.

They are also being incompetently performed on a large scale, according to a survey of surveys to be published this month by the American Statistical Association. And if that's so, which may indeed be the case, since the ASA study was carefully performed, the survey industry may be in for some hard knocks. Survey costs have been zooming, both because they consume lots of labor and people are increasingly disinclined to cooperate — and bigger bills naturally generate cost-cutting sentiments; furthermore, government activists have come to regard surveys as a status quo device for delaying action, as is evident in a recent speech by Hale Champion, the Under Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare (see page 7).

But on to the ASA survey, whose genesis, two years ago, was concern over the high "incompletion" rates — slammed doors — that many surveyors were encountering among the general public (SGR Vol. IV, No. 9). ASA turned to the National Science Foundation, which provided $95,000 for a study, and Barbara A. Bailar, of the US Bureau of the Census, and C. Michael Lanphier, of York University, Toronto, agreed to look into the matter.

As things worked out, what they eventually concentrated on was the actual conduct of a representative sampling of surveys — 26 commissioned by federal agencies and 10 by state and local governments, and other organizations in 1975. And the result is a dour report bearing the elongated title: "Development of Survey Methods to Assess Survey Practices: A Report to the American Statistical Association Pilot Project on the Assessment of Survey Practices and Data Quality in Surveys of Human Populations."

The net conclusion was that a high proportion of these surveys were so sloppily performed that the data and conclusions drawn from them are not to be trusted.

To get an inside look at how the surveys were conducted, the authors guaranteed anonymity for the agencies that commissioned the surveys and the contractors that carried them out. But since the sample is described as representative — apart from the specialized field of election polling, which was not covered in the study — it may be assumed that the findings are fairly applicable to a broad range of government-sponsored surveying.

Some of the findings were as follows:

• "Fifteen of 26 Federal surveys did not meet their objectives, four because of poor design, four more because of failure to implement plans for probability sampling, and the remaining seven because of a combination of serious technical flaws. These technical flaws included high nonresponse rates, failure to compute variances or computation of variances in the wrong way, inclusion of inferences in the final report that could not have been substantiated by the survey results, no verification of interviewing, and no data cleaning.

• "Seven of the 10 non-Federal surveys did not meet their objectives, one because of poor design, four more because of failure to implement plans for probability sampling, and the remaining two because of a combination of serious technical flaws.

• "Samples were, for the most part, poorly designed. Very little documentation existed. A majority of the designs featured clustered samples, but only four sur-

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Social Science Report

MEDAL

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he grasped was the medal awards ceremony; he handed out a flock of them that year.

Gerald Ford used the ceremony to signal peace with science. In 1975, he included Linus Pauling in the awards group, which was duly noted by the scientific community, since Pauling was persona non grata with Nixon and his henchmen.

The awards that Jimmy Carter made last week were actually decided on during the Ford Administration. Ford deferred the ceremony to the new administration, apparently for no reason other than scheduling difficulties during an election year.

The medal is not accompanied by any cash stipend. The winners get an engraved disk of bronze and a presidential handshake. The latest recipients are:

Roger Guillemin, Salk Institute
Keith Roberts, University of Colorado
Efraim Racker, Cornell University
Edward O. Wilson, Harvard University
Morris Cohen, MIT
Peter Goldmark, Goldmark Communications; formerly, CBS
Erwin Mueller (deceased), University of Pennsylvania
Kurt Friedrichs, New York University
Hassler Whitney, Inst. for Advanced Studies, Princeton
Samuel Goudsmit, University of Nevada; formerly, Brookhaven National Laboratory
H.S. Gutowsky, University of Illinois
Frederick D. Rossini, Rice University
Verner E. Suomi, University of Wisconsin
Henry Taube, Stanford University
George E. Uhlenbeck, Rockefeller University

. . . Conclusions Often Unsupported by Survey Data

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veys correctly accounted for the effect of clustering on variances.

- "Survey response rates were difficult to collect and compare. Response rates have different names and different definitions in different places and circumstances. In one survey, a response rate reported as .90 was actually .56 when substitutions were properly considered. Another response rate reported as .76 was really .50 when persons with unpublished telephone numbers, telephones out of order, and some other cases were included as eligible units in the denominator of the rate.
- "Quality control over data processing operations varied considerably. Neither verification of coding nor machine editing to resolve inconsistencies and resolve impossible codes is routinely performed.
- "Estimation processes varied widely. If weighted data were used for estimates of means, totals, and proportions, the weights were frequently not used in estimating the variances of these means, totals, and proportions. Variances were not even estimated for 10 of the 24 Federal surveys requiring variances or for six of the ten non-Federal surveys."

The authors rarely expressed any conclusions about their awful findings, but now and then they apparently found it difficult to refrain from throwing in a personal observation, as when they stated: "One would hope that survey results bearing on controversial subjects or public policy would include enough evidence to support reported findings, including estimates of uncertainty. This is not generally the case. Causal inferences were often made in cases where variables were correlated in such a way that causal relationships could not have been determined by a survey of the type used."

They also found that "problems in sampling were pervasive among the 36 surveys, were of profound importance, and — worse yet — unrecognized."

Since surveying is here to stay, it is difficult to argue with the authors' conclusion that a still broader study should be conducted to get a more exact understanding of what's going on out there, and that standards should be devised to assure the quality of survey results.

What's noteworthy, though, is that the general public is far ahead of the surveyors and statisticians in skepticism toward those who would peer into its mind. The proposal that led to the soon-to-be-published study of surveys, stated that "At the same time that the use of surveys is growing, there is a growing reluctance on the part of the public to supply the information requested. There are frequent complaints of too many surveys, but this is only part of the problem. Voluntary participation also seems to be hindered by resentment against government or against business, by a dislike of invasion of privacy, by fear that responses may go into some 'data

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Industry Increases Share of Federal R&D Funds

Federal research and development spending, excluding construction, will add up to $26.3 billion this fiscal year, and of this sum, 75 per cent — $19.8 billion — will be spent by non-government organizations, according to the National Science Foundation.

Industrial firms will receive 53 per cent of the total, up from 51 per cent last year; universities and colleges are steady at 12 per cent, and direct work by federal agencies is down 1 point, to 25 per cent of the total.

The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare accounts for 50 per cent of all federal support for academic institutions; NSF support totals 18 per cent.

In terms of research — which is set apart from the more costly category of development — the life sciences are the leaders, accounting for 33 per cent of all federal research spending. The following table shows the research distribution by field:

Federal obligations for research by field of science: fiscal years 1976-78
(Dollars in millions)

	Actual	Estimates	
Field of science	**1976**	**1977**	**1978**
Total	$7,873	$8,853	$9,490
Life sciences	2,646	2,983	3,105
Engineering	2,378	2,602	2,811
Physical sciences	1,221	1,406	1,570
Environmental sciences	770	852	925
Social sciences	390	457	482
Mathematics and computer sciences	153	166	184
Psychology	140	164	178
Other sciences	175	224	235

The study, NSF 77-323, is available without charge from Division of Science Resources Studies, National Science Foundation, 1800 G St. NW., Washington, DC 20550.

Congress at Work: It's Chaotic, Study Finds

Anyone who has observed the proceedings of the US Congress — the recent hearings on Bert Lance, for example — has probably noticed a peculiar characteristic of our legislators at work: They are often absent from where they are supposed to be, but when they are present, they often are occupied with matters other than the subject at hand, and then not infrequently, they pop up and dash off to something else.

Anyone having an appointment with a member of Congress often finds that the legislator is late, the meeting is frequently interrupted by urgent telephone calls and tiptoeing, harried secretaries bearing messages or sheafs of paper, and then the member, with many apologies, must rush away.

The US Congress is many things, but serene and tranquil it is not. Common observation reveals this to any visitor. But now, through a systematic study carried out by the Commission on Administrative Review of the House of Representatives, chaired by Rep. David B. Obey (D-Wisc.), we have a systematic examination of the House side of that frenetic institution.

The Obey Commission, as it's come to be known, was given the task of looking into the operations of the House for the purpose of developing recommendations for making it run smoother and more efficiently. It has come up with a long list of suggestions that, sensible though they were, were instantly rejected by a majority of the House membership. But reform, especially in Congress, is often a tortuous process; it may yet come. In the meantime, it is useful to look at some of the Obey Commission findings and ponder the bizarre work situation that envelopes the 435 Representatives that we've sent to Washington to help look after the nation's well being.

On the basis of minute-by-minute surveys of how the members spend their time, the Commission concluded that "An average day for legislators is so filled with diverse activities that little time is available for concentrated attention on any single issue. Legislators have exhaustive schedules that keep them running back and forth from their offices to floor sessions, committee meetings, or receptions and events in various parts of Washington. Legislators, too, are regularly driving or flying back and forth from Washington to their congressional districts.

"On average," the Commission continued, "Representatives were found to work an eleven-hour day, starting at 8:30 a.m. and concluding at 7:30 p.m. . . . Their days are long and fragmented. Rarely do Members have sufficient blocks of time when they are free from the frenetic pace of the Washington 'treadmill' to think about the implications of various public policies. As a result, legislators are often compelled by circumstances to rely on the judgment of others — agency officials, staff aides, lobbyists, or colleagues — for evaluations of the content and import of various legislation.

"No matter how conscientious a Representative might be, the splintering of his/her time into so many tiny bits and pieces hampers the effective conduct of lawmaking, oversight and constituent service functions. . . . Further exacerbating the difficulties caused by the fragmentation of the Member time are unpredictable or untimely developments in scheduling. These occur when a Representative is given short notice that his/her presence is expected somewhere other than where he/she planned to be. The most carefully developed schedule," the Commission observed, "can be disrupted by changes in committee hearings on business, by committee and subcommittee meetings extending longer than anticipated, by unexpected meetings with other Members and staff aides, or by an important constituent's unanticipated visit to meet with the legislator."

Another problem that the Commission found was that "The work of the House is so unevenly distributed among Members and committees that the scheduling of legislative business is severely affected. Many legislators have so many committee assignments that it prevents them from attending or devoting sustained attention to all their committee and subcommittee duties. There is also the problem of frequent conflicts among committee/subcommittee meetings and the floor."

In 1963-64, the Commission stated, there were 156

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SURVEYS *(Continued from Page 5)*

bank' of personal data, by awareness that some surveys — or some responses — might be used to the respondents' own detriment, and perhaps by other facts. Among survey researchers there is growing concern that these problems actually threaten the continued usefulness of this important social science and policy tool."

What the survey of surveys took for granted, unfortunately, is that surveying theory is sound, and, when properly implemented, is a suitable tool for formulating public policy. That premise is so rich with political implications and unspoken assumptions that it merits pause. Are the statistically selected views of a few — collected, analyzed, and presented by organizations with their own vested interests — a proper basis for making public policy? Maybe. But, if so, what then becomes of the traditional process of elected representatives formulating public policy?

The survey boom deserves to be studied, but in far broader terms than the slight question of whether surveyors are following the rules of their trade.

. . . But a Lot of the Woes are Self-Inflicted

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committees and subcommittees in the House, and, on average, each member had 4.3 committee and subcommittee assignments. By last year, the number of committees and subcommittees had risen to 184, and each member averaged 6.1 assignments.

With 257 members holding four or more committee assignments, the Commission continued, the mere scheduling of meetings becomes a complex task. It noted that one committee chairman "expressed the view that he could finish up work on a major bill in three days but it takes one and a half months because it is difficult to get Members to attend the consecutive committee sessions needed to process the legislation."

Ranging over the full scope of House operations, the Obey Commission on September 23 issued a long list of recommendations. To replace the antiquated system now employed for housekeeping in the House — from running the elevators to managing the cafeterias and barber shops — the Commission recommended appointment of a House Administrator. And to guard against fiddling with travel and expense funds, it recommended creation of the position of House Comptroller to "serve as chief financial officer of the House." The post of House Auditor would also be created.

The quest for an answer to the proliferation of committees and committee assignments, ironically, would be entrusted to a Select Committee on Committees, "appointed by the Speaker to study committee jurisdictions and assignments."

What the Obey Commission fails to note is that a great many of the burdens under which Congress staggers are deliberately self-inflicted as part of the process of staying in office. Members of Congress welcome and encourage visits by swarms of constituents, not only because Congressmen are by nature a gregarious breed, but because hospitality, or the appearance thereof, pays off on election day. It's a nuisance for a Congressman to rush out of a committee hearing to pump the hand of a visiting constituent, but for the visitor, it's a memorable event.

As for multiple committee assignments, many members seek all they can get, because power and influence are wielded through committees, and committee seniority, either directly or indirectly, enables a Member to deliver the goods for his constituents, which helps assure that he'll be there in the next Congress.

Nevertheless, the pace of life in the House — and it's the same, if not worse, in the Senate, where 100 Senators share duties that are divided among 435 Representatives — has become so frenzied that eventually many of the Obey reforms are likely to be adopted.

Though the realization has been a long time coming, the Members now recognize that they've made life near-impossible for themselves, and that's a first step toward doing something about it. — DSG

US-Saudi Solar Pact

The Department of Energy has entered into a 5-year agreement with Saudi Arabia that calls for joint funding of $100 million of solar-energy research. DOE notes, however, that the program is starting small — with total first-year funding of $500,000 and that "Congressional appropriations will be sought for the remaining four years."

In Quotes: A Time for Study and . . .

The following excerpt is from an address on health policy, by Hale Champion, Under Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, October 25 at the Institute of Medicine:

It seems to me that HEW, having over-reacted to the critics of the sixties, is overdue for a compensating correction. Having been told that the programs of those years were designed without sufficient regard for the side consequences, we now sometimes seem to worry only about the side consequences. Having been chided for not consulting the social scientists and their data back then, we now often seem to be asking for the data and their compilers actually to make decisions for us. HEW has become more accustomed to analyzing than to decision-making. . . .

Our policy advisers too often have had us throwing money at studies — or data, if you will — rather than at the problems. And, it appears to me, that much of the same has been going on in energy, in the economy, and in a lot of other critical areas of national policy. . . .

We must not over-react to uncertainty. We need to understand that the data will always be unclear in complex areas of social policy and that demonstration projects will never solve major problems, that experiments can often be simply an excuse not to decide tough social and political questions. We can and should be sensitive to unknowns and still move forward.

OTA Gets a Director: Russ Peterson Accepts

One of the more convoluted minuets in administrative headhunting was successfully concluded November 18 when Russell W. Peterson, to the surprise of none and the annoyance of many, announced that he would accept the directorship of the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment (OTA).

As recounted at perhaps excessive length in the last issue of SGR, Peterson, the founding president of the fledgling public interest group known as New Directions, agreed to be considered for the OTA directorship, but only with the understanding that he wouldn't say yes or no until an offer was made.

When it was made, on October 27, Peterson was out of reach in India, where he was off on a mission for New Directions, which is an internationally aimed version of Common Cause.

Upon his return, he met with his board colleagues at New Directions, and shortly afterwards announced that he would accept the offer.

The decision was well received at OTA, since Peterson has many qualities of value to that troubled agency. As former Republican governor of Delaware, he is living proof that OTA Board Chairman Edward Kennedy is not using the office for his own devious political designs, whatever they may be. Also, Peterson is a Ph.D. chemist and former chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, a background that may or may not be relevant to OTA's problems, but more likely than not it is.

Since no purpose would be served by chastising Peterson for bailing out at this vulnerable stage of New Direction's existence, Board Chairman Jack T. Conway and Council Chairperson Margaret Mead issued gracious statements about their departing colleague.

Conway said that New Directions would "sorely miss Russ Peterson," but added that he "had every reason to believe that the organization would continue to thrive and to build on the firm foundation established by its founding leaders." That, of course, remains to be seen, but even with the influential Peterson at the helm, New Directions was far from a runaway success in attracting dues-paying members.

Mead showed a lot of imagination in her remarks, which included the observation that "the goals of New Directions and OTA are very similar in their global concerns, and New Directions hopes therefore that this will mean OTA and New Directions will be able to complement each other's efforts."

Whatever can be said about the two organizations, the claim that they at all resemble each other is a bit far fetched. New Directions is a lobbying organization beholden to no one but a broadly based membership; OTA is a research organization that's under the thumb of an irascible Congress that's yet to understand what technology assessment is all about.

Peterson begins work at OTA on January 16.

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